

# Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

## GOD IN MY IMAGE

November 28, 2016

I was a complete mess before I came to Christ. I was angry, unclean, and my sins disgusted even me. Then one day almost thirty-three years ago Jesus Christ washed it all away while I knelt at an altar of prayer. I say with God as witness there has never been a day, an hour, or even a moment that I regretted calling upon the Lord or that I ever had the slightest desire for anything of that life again. Today, when I say "Jesus saves from sin" I am not preaching a theory. I know what it is to be dying in sin, and thank God I know what it is to be saved from sin!

One of the absurdities of that time (of which there were many) was how spiritual I sometimes felt even though I was so far from God. There was a particular secular song that could always trigger my supposed spirituality. Its words said, *"I don't believe that heaven waits for only those who congregate. I like to think that God is love. He's down below and up above. He's watching people everywhere. He knows who does and doesn't care."* It was amazing how myself, and others I knew, could feel so spiritual when a song like this began to play. After all it told us everything we wanted to hear. "We didn't need to go to church." "We would be alright with God as long as we cared about someone." "And most importantly, we could have God exactly as we liked to think that he was." In other words, "We could make God to be whatever we wanted him to be just by wanting him to be it." Now tell me if you think that is not absurd. The truth is it did not matter how spiritual I felt, I was lost, sinful, and headed for Hell. It was not until a man of God challenged my "spirituality" that I even began to consider how I desperately needed a Savior.

When I look back, I laugh at my foolishness and my arrogance in thinking that my preference of how God should be had any bearing whatsoever on how God really is. Yet in one sense, my blindness was understandable. I was lost. I did not profess to know, follow, or even believe God. What is much more disturbing than the foolishness of an unbeliever who tries to make God fit their image, is a professing believer who attempts the same thing. Too many times the people of God have closed their ears and eyes to the word of God and said, "I just like to think things are this way," even when the word of God says differently.

Another of the great proofs people use as justification to ignore the word of God is "their experience." As though somehow the eternal truth of God is limited to what we have or have not experienced in our life or walk with God. Recently Bro. Leroy Surface was confronted by a man after a service who told him "I do not believe your theory about a child of God not being a sinner." Bro. Surface reminded the man that he had only preached what was clearly spoken by the scriptures. The man replied that he had lived in sin for twenty-five years after confessing Jesus as savior so he knew by experience that the children of God were still sinners. Now I ask you, "Which was the truth; the word of God or the man's experience?" A lost person may know by experience that there is no savior, but their experience in lying to them. A sick person may know by experience that God no longer heals, but their experience has convinced them of a fallacy. Even so, a religious person may know by experience that no one is free from sin, but since the word of God says, "*Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness,*" Romans 6:18 I say their experience has deceived them.

Peter tells of a supernatural event he experienced when he was with Jesus in the mount. He saw Jesus transfigured with Moses and Elijah and heard an audible voice from heaven saying of Jesus, *"This is my beloved Son."* What could be more sure than such an experience? Peter answers this question saying. *"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed..."* What is more sure than a supernatural experience? Peter says *"the prophecy of the scripture"* is! II Peter 1:16-21

Even as a minister of the gospel, I have seen times that the word of God contradicted and destroyed the things I thought I knew. On those occasions I was faced with a choice. Would I believe what I saw the scriptures were saying, or would I cling to my own personal preferences and traditions? Would I receive *"the love of the truth"* II Thessalonians 2:10 that the apostle Paul spoke of, or would I prefer and uphold the traditions of men? I would have to decide if I really believed that GOD IS TRUE.

Is your gospel the gospel of the bible? You can know for certain if you will simply look at what the scriptures say. Does the blood of Christ that you trust "cover your sin" or does it "cleanse from all sin?" Does the cross you glory in leave you "crucifying the old man" or is your "old man crucified with Christ?" Did your savior die to "pay your penalty" or was he "manifest to take away our sin?" Are "your sins hidden from the eyes of God" or are all things "naked and opened unto the eyes of him?" You do not need me to answer these questions for you today. It is all clearly written in the scripture for those who desire to know. If you want to, you can know Christ AS HE IS!

God Bless,  
Pastor Keith Surface  
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